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5356

DISSEMINATION

for EGYPT file

From: Livingston, Robert
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2011
Subject: Urgent: Amendment to Strike FMF

Subject: Paul Amendment Offered to strike FMF

Dear Friends,

An amendment has been offered to strike all Foreign Military Financing from the Continuing Resolution:

REP. RON PAUL, R-Texas, may offer an amendment (#53) to strike the bill's \$5.3 billion for the Foreign Military Financing Program, including \$3 billion for Israel, \$1.3 billion for Egypt and \$300 million for Jordan. The amendment also cuts \$1 billion for the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Fund.

As well intentioned as it may be, this is a dangerous effort given the exponential gains the United States receives from Egypt toward our national security. It is also untimely to cut aid to countries like Israel, Egypt and Jordan, given the regional uncertainty and political transitions underway. Any hope we have for a democratic transition in Egypt depends directly upon our relations with the people of Egypt who have brought about this change.

US-Egyptian military cooperation over the last 30 years has been invaluable. The total military aid package to Egypt, Israel and Jordan does not approach the cost of funding for war in Iraq and Afghanistan, yet the rewards to us from aid to Egypt flowing from access to Egyptian control over the Suez Canal and the Red Sea are incalculable. Moreover, since the Egyptian military was critical to the peaceful resolution of the current crisis, what kind of message would we be sending them by cutting off all aid?

The United States can not abandon this cornerstone in our bilateral relationships. To do so would risk our presence in the region and send a terrible message to our friends and allies around the world.

Please devote your most considered attention to this unfortunate proposal.

Best wishes,

Bob Livingston
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